

Delaware Electric Cooperative and the Delaware Department of Agriculture launch new grant program

GREENWOOD, Del. – The Delaware Department of Agriculture has partnered with the Delaware Electric Cooperative to launch a [new irrigation grant program](#) to help Delaware farmers install environmentally friendly irrigation systems. The program will provide \$10,000 in funding to farmers to convert diesel-powered irrigation systems to electric.

Under the program, Delaware Electric Co-op will offer farmers up to \$5,000 to cover the cost of running electric to converted systems. Funding from the Delaware Department of Agriculture will provide farmers up to an additional \$5,000 to cover costs including parts and labor associated with the electric motor and starter installation, removal of the existing gear head and components, and electrician costs involved in the irrigation system conversion. The State funding was approved by the Delaware General Assembly in June. The grants are only available to farmers served by Delaware Electric Cooperative.

“The availability of this program is important to Delaware family farms that are still utilizing diesel-powered irrigation systems to water their crops,” said Secretary of Agriculture Michael T. Scuse. “There are approximately 500 of these systems remaining throughout the state. By replacing them with more energy efficient electrical systems, there will be a decrease in carbon emissions thereby improving air quality, and a reduction in noise pollution. The conversion will help to increase farmers’ long-term profitability and the ability to utilize smart technology.”

Farmers, who receive a grant from the Delaware Electric Co-op, will also save money by participating in the Co-op's load control program, which allows the Co-op to cycle-off power to irrigation units during peak energy usage times. Participants in the load control program typically enjoy a savings of 18 to 25 percent on their energy bills.

According to Bill Andrew, President and CEO of Delaware Electric Co-op, "This new program will allow Delawareans to breathe cleaner air and will also help to lower the cost for farmers to irrigate their crops. Electric powered irrigation pivots are cheaper to operate and maintain than diesel systems and have less of an impact on the environment.

To be eligible for the program, proposed irrigation systems must have a minimum 20 kilowatt load. Farmers will also be required to sign a contract for controlled load service with the Co-op for 60 months. For more information about the program, contact Tony Rutherford, Manager of Engineering at 302-349-3144 or by email at trutherford@delaware.coop.

Delaware Electric Cooperative is a member-owned electric utility serving more than 100,000 member-owners in Kent and Sussex County, Delaware. For more information, visit us on the web at www.delaware.coop or follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

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